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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
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NSS/NSC Review Completed

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INFORMATION~~SECRET/NODIS~~

November 1, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger K

SUBJECT: Three Queries

Back for Pres.
NOV 17 1969

Through Bob Haldeman you asked me for answers to three questions:

1. You mentioned having heard that, after the coup in Libya, King Hassan of Morocco had sent a special message through the Ambassador to you but received no response. In fact, the message was a request to you to receive Hassan's special emissary. You will recall having sent your own emissary to talk with King Hassan about the designation of Strausz-Hupe as Ambassador and then having received Minister Tahiri here. Perhaps the reason a report of this kind is circulating is that this was all handled in a highly confidential manner but the fact is that you did respond to the King and you did receive his emissary.

2. You asked my recommendation on sending Bob Murphy on a quiet tour of the Mediterranean. Perhaps this request has been overtaken by your decision to send Frank Lincoln, Admiral Anderson and Bob Murphy. I am in touch with Frank Lincoln about the details of carrying out this mission. As far as the Arab-Israeli area is concerned, I recommend a very low key visit, perhaps even having the different members of the group go individually to different countries. The problem is that the Arabs are extremely suspicious of any manifestation of American intelligence or even of Presidential missions. We would not want to create the impression that you are working out some sort of conspiracy in the Middle East.

I do have a thought about the broader Mediterranean area which might be looked into. My thought is that it would be useful to do some thinking about the concept of a Mediterranean policy. Bureaucratically, we focus on the Arab-Israeli, the North African, the Greek or the European problems in separate compartments. It may not be valid to over-emphasize a policy for the whole area, and there would be some disadvantages in doing so. However, there might be

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an advantage in shifting the Middle East focus from the narrow Arab-Israeli issue into a broader context where things may look a little brighter. For instance, you have outstanding invitations to visit Yugoslavia, Iran, Turkey, Morocco and perhaps Tunisia and it might be possible to develop a rationale for a Mediterranean trip if you wanted to go to that area. I hasten to emphasize that this concept will need a lot more thought than I have been able to give it but it is something that Bob Murphy might think about.

3. You asked for an analysis of the proposition that the Arabs might be trying to lay a foundation for seeking Russian volunteers to fly Egyptian planes. This arose out of the concern of the Arab world of reports that American citizens are serving in the Israeli armed forces.

To begin with, I should say that we have made a major effort to kill that story. It grew out of a misquoted comment by our embassy in Tel Aviv on a 1967 Supreme Court decision. In fact, Department of Justice regulations have promulgated a very cautious interpretation of the decision which held unconstitutional the expatriation of an American citizen who had voted in an Israeli election. Their regulations say essentially that each citizenship case would have to be considered on its merits in the courts.

To answer your question, however, it is possible that the Egyptians and Soviets would find some political advantage in claiming that the Soviet technicians now in the UAR are "volunteers." However, the advantage would be more political than military because the Soviet technicians are already flying UAR aircraft--though not in combat as far as we know--and are working with front-line UAR anti-aircraft and artillery units, as well as working as advisers with higher level headquarters units. So militarily they are in a position now to do anything that volunteers could do if they want to risk the official involvement. The only previous instance we have in the Middle East of this sort of issue is a brief period in December 1967 when the Soviets let their pilots fly combat missions for a brief period on the Republican side in Yemen. When one of their pilots was shot down and identified, they stopped very quickly and Syrian pilots took over the job. In short, this could happen, but it would probably have more of a political than a military consequence. We can be more critical of Soviet involvement than we have been.

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October 30, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Harold H. Saunders *HS*

SUBJECT: Three Queries

1. The President relayed to you through Bob Haldeman three questions. The attached memo is a composite memo answering all three. (Haldeman at bottom of attached.)

2. You will note that Haldeman's memo cast the Murphy trip as a "Mediterranean" trip--not just an Arab-Israeli one. As noted in the attached, a Mediterranean rationale is possible. It would broaden the itinerary beyond what I earlier suggested to you (Cairo, Beirut, Amman, Riyadh) to include a stop at NATO headquarters and perhaps Rome and Tunis. Murphy could do that on his own. Is this intended?

Yes _____ No _____

Recommendation: That you send the attached memo to the President.

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